

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention is directed to a method for screening and identifying molecules that transactivate a neurotrophin receptor and mediate neuronal cell survival in the absence of neurotrophins which uses one or a combination of three different assays. The assays involve detecting the phosphorylation of a neurotrophin receptor, detecting the phosphorylation of phosphatidylinositol 3'-kinase or Akt enzyme, and assessing neuronal cell survival in the absence of neurotrophins.

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